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**STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY ON THE RELEASE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
REPORT ON THE ARACOMA ALMA MINE**

WASHINGTON, D.C- Today the Department of Labor issued its report on the fire at the Aracoma Alma Mine on January 19, 2006 that killed two miners and led to the passage by Congress of the MINER Act.

Senator Kennedy said, "As this report clearly shows, the tragic deaths at the Aracoma Mine were preventable. Basic mine safety enforcement was neglected and America's miners paid the price with their lives.

The MINER Act was a vital step, but more needs to be done. We need swift compliance by mining companies with the Act's requirements, diligent inspection and enforcement of mine safety regulations, and tougher penalties for those who endanger the lives of mine workers.